



YAMATO BONSAI KAI

“FRIENDSHIP THROUGH BONSAI”

Since 1968

Newsletter – February 2012



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

By Tony Hayworth– President

I want to thank all the members of the Club for your support as we begin the year. The new Board was installed at the 17 January Club Meeting. The first board meeting of the year was held on 28 January. Items discussed were the 2012 Calendar of Events, the Fall Show, format of the Monthly meeting, participation and committee volunteers and the Club financials. At the next Club meeting (21 Feb), I will have a handout of the “2012 Calendar of Events” for you perusal. We will endeavor to keep you informed, via the newsletter and other direct email communications this year, as or if things change or are corrected.

I would like to directly address the topic of Sensei Uchida and the Club. He spoke to us at the December meeting and I would like to follow up that topic officially with all members at this time. Johnny Uchida is still our leader and our Sensei. That is not and will not change. He is Mr. Yamato Bonsai Kai. What he expressed at the meeting, and twice with me in conversations since then, is that he needs to take it easy and he wants some of the others in the club to step up and do more of the so-called heavy lifting. Sensei is not going anywhere, so let’s get that off your mind and out of the gossip mills.

Johnny has lead this Club for a very long time and told me he simply wants to do less at the Club meetings and wants to supervise and relax, and correct all my mistakes!! Seriously, he wants the Club to move forward but will still be involved. Please understand, bonsai and Yamato are his life and he will still be very involved with the club but just at a slower and lower pace. Sensei is a humble man; let’s not make a big deal of this request and his decision.

I hope this direct communication handles this topic and if anyone has questions, please let me know.

Club Workshops – we will have 4 scheduled workshops this year. All events are listed on the Yamato 2012 Calendar of Events.

The first workshop is Saturday **25 February, from 5 PM**, at the same place we hold our monthly club meeting (EJCC, San Lorenzo, CA). Workshop fee is 10 dollars.

The theme will be on transplanting and root work. Of course that involves some styling or decision making on several aspects of your composition. My preference is for you to bring bonsai or pre-bonsai, but if you must, initial nursery stock is okay too (just not too raw please).

We will organize food and beverage for each event. Sign up will be at the Club Meeting on 21 Feb or contact me if you have ques-

tions or special needs.

Annual Fall Show – our show this year will be on the Weekend of 20 & 21 October, 2012. Please reserve this weekend now!!

Housekeeping – Annual Membership Drive continues this month. Bring your dues to the next club meeting or simply mail them to the Club P.O. Box in Union City.

At any time you have input, please contact me to discuss your needs, ideas or concerns.

About the Yamato Bonsai Club

The Yamato Bonsai Club has a long and distinguished history in the Bay Area. In 1968, the club was founded with six members including its first Sensei, Mr. Jimmy Inadomi from the Castro Valley area. Its second sensei was Mr. Juzaburo Furuzawa. Since 1976, the Yamato Bonsai Club has been under the guidance of Sensei John Uchida of Hayward.

Note: If you have moved or have update contact details, please notify Yamato Bonsai Kai, so that we may update our records. Thank you.

AT THE NEXT CLUB MEETING...

On Tuesday, February 21st, Tony and Mike will give detailed instruction on repotting a mature Green Cedar. This Cedar is well overdue a transplanting and has pushed itself out of the pot by several inches. The Cedar has been a bonsai since the mid 1980's and is currently displayed in a slant-

ing style. We will discuss shaping and restyling possibilities.

Also on the docket are soil compositions and approaches to soil products. If you have any samples you would like reviewed and or to discuss, please bring them.

If you have a mature bonsai tree that is grossly neglected from a repotting perspective, bring it for show and tell also. Don't miss this club meeting event.

PLACE: [Eden Japanese Community Center, 710 Elgin Street, San Lorenzo, CA](#)

Note: Club Meetings start at 7:30 PM.



Meeting Location Reminder

Our monthly club meetings are now held at the Eden Japanese Community Center. The location address is 710 Elgin Street San Lorenzo.



SENSEI UCHIDA'S NOTES

By Johnny Uchida – Club Sensei

Editor's note: no news from Sensei this month

ROOT-HOLY COW!



I started on a California Juniper that was showing signs of being root-bound. This is what I found!! -Tony Hayworth

BONSAI BASIC

February is an exciting time for a bonsai enthusiast. You must start now to prepare for the transplanting season. There is much to do so plan accordingly. This month you can begin transplanting some varieties. Trident Maples, Apple, Oak, California Juniper, Elm, Junipers, Plum, Quince are on the list. Prepare with proper soil mixtures, good drainage is important. ALWAYS guard against direct frost on newly transplanted bonsai.

Soil recipes are an Art just as much as they are a Science. Please keep this in mind. The following are my current views about bonsai soil and mixtures. Bonsai hobbyists are always looking for new ideas and adjust-

ing recipes based on results and availability of materials.

There are a few key factors in soil game: type of tree, geographic location, watering habits, and availability of materials for a mixture. Ultimately, the above factors mixed in with a few years of results, will guide you to success in this area. Another factor over the past few years is the availability of Japanese soil products in America. Sometimes cost can be a limiting factor.

I believe that one should master two basic soil mixtures: 1) Conifers and 2) Others. They then can be added to or varied as the bonsai specimen may require.

Conifers

80 % course material (lava, pumice, rock, sand, etc.)

20 % soil material (soil product, akadama, fir bark, cedar chips)

Others

70 % course material (lava, pumice, rock, sand, etc.)

30 % soil material (soil product, akadama, fir bark, cedar chips)

Conifers do better in soil that is well draining. Let's face it; they want a good drink during the watering session – not a swimming lesson! You want a soil environment that promotes drainage and provides for air circulation.

The sand should be coarse. No fine sand as you will not promote drainage and air circulation.

Loam types of soil, no clay type allowed. Use Akadama soil from Japan if you can.

Always screen all ingredients. Note: Akadama is a clay type, but since it is fired, it is different than simple clay soil or clay loam. (Let's call it magic – I don't know how else to explain it).

Here are some typical ingredients to be considered:

Agricultural pumice

Akadama soil

Course peat moss

Coarse sand

Decomposed granite

Fir Bark

Horticultural charcoal

Kanuma soil

Lava rock

Loam soil (dark)

Organic Pine Bark Mulch

Organic compost

Redwood compost

You do not need to worry about mixing or adding fertilizer type amendments to your soil mixtures. Your trees should get fertilizers through your regular watering and fertilizer habits, when it is the proper time to feed your trees.

Azaleas and Camellias must have an acid soil. Don't assume that if you are using Peat that it has the acidic content that you need. This is where proper feeding habits will enter the picture for a healthy tree.

Avoid Material Dust

Why do we sift bonsai soil? Simple, the material listed above often come in bulk and in this process breakdown and contain a lot of

dust from the main product itself.

When dust is allowed as a component in making a bonsai soil mixture, it will ultimately end up being washed down in the pot and clog itself into a solid mass. This then results in poor drainage, and poor air circulation... and a really bad situation for the roots. So make sure that in the process of assembling your soil mixture, you sift the materials to avoid a dusty mixture. It makes no sense to go to the trouble and expense of repotting if you do not do it correctly and with an eye towards a healthy tree. Anything that can get through a 2mm mesh screen is only good for garden fill or perhaps a muck recipe.

Soil Layering

I would like to comment on the layering of soil. This is my rule that I like to apply. My position is that the bottom of the bonsai container should have a 1 cm or so layer of very coarse material. After that, other than a very thin layer of top dressing for a show, I like to use the same consistence or coarseness for the remainder of soil in the bonsai container.

I don't support the theory that the bonsai soil should gradually decrease in size, from bottom to top, consisting of 3 to 4 different sizes in the layers. This just does not make sense to me. I believe that one soil size throughout the pot (except the very bottom layer) is the best application to allow equal resistance in root development and help to promote an even flow of water throughout the rest of the container during watering. The multiple layering methods, combined with any dust, create an environment ripe for clogs and uneven water penetration.

A final thought; your bonsai soil must be

porous. If it is thick and loamy the tree will not grow and will not be healthy



GSBF CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(For a more complete list, please refer to Golden Statements calendar of events or visit the web site at www.gsbf-bonsai.org).

Some nearby scheduled events are:

February 4-6 Santa Nella, California

California Shohin Seminar 2012 at the Hotel de Oro. Registration forms and information will be available starting October 30, 2011. Visit the website at www.calshohin.org or email calshohin@yahoo.com.

February 25-26 Oakland, California

GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt: Mammoth Fundraiser, 2012 at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. On Saturday an auction of fabulous bonsai will be from 1-4PM, with preview at 12Noon. Sunday hours are from 9AM-4PM and will feature demonstrations by Collection Curator, Kathy Shaner and Team, many vendors, a large consignment sale of bonsai and bonsai related items and several raffle drawings throughout the day. For general information email www.bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com, visit www.gsbf-bonsai.org/lake-merritt/NewHome.htm or phone Randi Keppeler 650-598-0127.

Mar. 31 - Apr. 1 Sacramento, California

Bonsai Sekiyu Kai of Sacramento: 35th Annual Bonsai Show at the Sacramento Betsuin Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Hours are: Saturday, 12-Noon - 5:00 PM, and Sunday, 10AM - 3:45PM. Demonstrations at 2PM, both days, by Bonsai Master Johnnie Uchida. Amenities include refreshments, light snacks, door prizes, raffles and a Silent Auction. Plant and bonsai tool sales also will be available. For more infor-

mation contact Dareld Binns, dwbphoto9op@yahoo.com



YAMATO CLASSIFIEDS

Pre-Bonsai and Bonsai - For Sale – Tony Hayworth has many bonsai and pre-bonsai material for sale... including some large landscape sized bonsai styled trees. These would make great focal points for any landscape or yard re-do projects that you may be planning. I am overstocked and want to move this material to a good home. Is that you?

I have a few pots for cheap also.

Contact Tony Hayworth early for best selection.

Phone: 510-471-9238 or bon-saicho@comcast.net

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## THIS MONTH ...

A very Happy Birthday to:

4th - Katherine Baggett  
4th – Tony Hayworth  
17th – Thee Kole  
18th – Gayle Ellis  
20th Dan Woodward  
28th – Lu Bedard

# 2012 Yamato Bonsai Kai

## --- MEMBERSHIP REQUEST FORM ---

### Instructions

Enter appropriate information in the provided form. Return this request form in person to the next club meeting or return by mail to:

**YAMATO BONSAI KAI**  
P. O. Box 770  
Union City, CA 94587-0770

To continue your membership and to receive the newsletter uninterrupted, please respond with your membership request form by 28 February.

|                              |                                          |                                 |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Request Type:</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal         | <input type="checkbox"/> New    |
| <b>Membership Type:</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/> Single          | <input type="checkbox"/> Family |
| <b>First Name(s):</b>        |                                          |                                 |
| <b>Last Name:</b>            |                                          |                                 |
| <b>* Address:</b>            |                                          |                                 |
| <b>* Phone:</b>              |                                          |                                 |
| <b>* Email Contact:</b>      |                                          |                                 |
| <b>** Birthday mm/dd:</b>    |                                          |                                 |
| <b>** Anniversary mm/dd:</b> | (enter spouse name if single membership) |                                 |

Make checks payable to "Yamato Bonsai Kai".

### Notes

**Single** = \$45  
**Family** = \$55 (same household)

**Email** = requested for Newsletter distribution  
\* = **Address, Phone & Email Contact** are only required on New Requests or if you have changed your details in the last year  
\*\* = **Birthday & Anniversary** = Optional.  
Used only for newsletter congratulatory announcement

### CONTACT US

If you need to mail anything to the club in general, please send to:

**YAMATO BONSAI KAI**  
**P. O. Box 770**  
**Union City, CA 94587-0770**

If there is anything you would like to contribute or comment on regarding the newsletter, contact the editor, Noah Hanna, at [no-ah@invalidargument.com](mailto:noah@invalidargument.com)

*If you have moved, or changed your email address, please notify Yamato Bonsai Kai, so that we may update our contact and mailing list information. Thank you.*

**YAMATO BONSAI KAI**

P. O. Box 770

Union City, CA 94587-0770

**Return Service Requested**

**Attention Postmaster:**

**Dated Material – Please Expedite**